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SIPDIS
USUN FOR GERMAIN AND KUJAWINSKI

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/31/2018
TAGS: PREL UNSC IS
SUBJECT: GUIDANCE: CONSULTATION ON THE SITUATION IN MIDDLE EAST, DECEMBER 31

Classified By: IO A/S Brian Hook. Reason 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) This is an action request. In the December 31 UN Security Council emergency session on Gaza, USUN is to oppose adoption of any outcome document. If any additional meetings are proposed, USUN should seek input from the Department.

¶2. (SBU) Suggested talking points for use by USUN during consultations follow:

Begin text.

Mr. President, the United States remains deeply concerned about the continuing violence in Gaza.

Hamas' decision not to extend the Egyptian-brokered period of calm is the root cause of this current situation and has gravely endangered the residents of both Gaza and southern Israel; it is an insult to Egypt's efforts to foster peace.

Hamas' repeated and indiscriminate rocket and mortar attacks in violation of the period of calm are in direct opposition to the peaceful aspirations of the Palestinian people and the desire of the legitimate Palestinian leadership, led by President Abbas, to negotiate a comprehensive, fair, and lasting peace in the Middle East based on a two-state solution.

Today I would like to make four points.

First, these rocket attacks must stop and a period of calm must be restored. It is the firm position of the United States that a cease-fire must be durable, sustainable and fully respected by all parties. This critical step would safeguard civilian populations in both Gaza and Israel and would greatly facilitate the safe and secure delivery of aid to help address the humanitarian needs of the Palestinian people. We are deeply concerned about the safety of civilians caught up in this conflict and urge all sides to help facilitate humanitarian assistance. The United States is the largest bilateral donor to the UN Relief and Works Agency, which provides essential services to hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, and its humanitarian work is now more important than ever.

Second, the authority of the legitimate and recognized Palestinian government in Gaza must be restored, beginning with the deployment of the Security Services of the Palestinian Authority on the Palestinian side of the border crossings -- a step consistent with the Agreement on Movement and Access of 2005.

Third, all concerned must work in concert to end weapons smuggling into Gaza and the transfer of armaments, except as authorized by the Palestinian Authority.

Finally, with regard to calls for a Security Council

resolution addressing the current situation, let me be clear; the United States supports even-handed action that recognizes the complexity of the events in Gaza and southern Israel. We are troubled by recent calls that do not take into account the cause of this current situation -- Hamas' terrorist rocket attacks -- and by so doing ignore the reality on the ground.

Mr. President, as we have long stated, Hamas can be a part of the peaceful process by accepting the principles outlined by the Quartet: renunciation of violence and terror, recognition of Israel, and acceptance of previous agreements between the parties, including the Roadmap. Its continued use of terrorist tactics such as rocket attacks demonstrate its continued opposition to the peaceful aspirations of the Palestinian people.

The U.S. will continue to work with other members of the international community, including our Arab partners, for the cessation of violence through a durable and sustainable cease-fire, the provision of humanitarian aid to the Palestinian people, and the restoration of power in Gaza to the legitimate Palestinian government led by President Abbas.

End text.

RICE